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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/971,830	10/04/2001	Richard A. Brandt	0200528.0006	3348
26574	7590	03/21/2005	EXAMINER	
SCHIFF HARDIN, LLP PATENT DEPARTMENT 6600 SEARS TOWER CHICAGO, IL 60606-6473			CHIU, RALEIGH W	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3711	

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/971,830	BRANDT, RICHARD A.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Raleigh Chiu	3711	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 January 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-19, 21-26 and 28-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 20, 27 and 34 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 14-19, 21-26 and 28-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 4,834,383 (Woehrle et al., hereinafter Woehrle) in view of U.S. Patent Numbers 4,566,695 (Melby) and 4,750,742 (Coupar).

Regarding claims 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29, Woehrle discloses the desirability of having longitudinal strings of the same length for consistent string response. See column 1, lines 32-42. Further, Woehrle explicitly describes the desirability of having a rectangular racquet frame so that the cross strings would have equal length but notes the disadvantages of appearance and inherent weakness (compared to standard oval frames). See column 1, lines 43-62. However, if one were unconcerned with racquet appearance, and given that both Melby (Figure 1) and Coupar (Figure 1) disclose that actual rectangular racquet frames are known in the art and can handle the attendant string tensions, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to construct a rectangular racquet frame so that the longitudinal strings would have equal length

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and the cross strings would have equal length. Woehrle teaches that strings of the same length will vibrate at the same frequency for improved racquet response. See the bridging paragraph between columns 3-4. Moreover, as Woehrle does not describe a uniquely specific method of stringing his racquet, one of ordinary skill would assume that conventional stringing techniques would be used; such conventional techniques (e.g., a two-piece method with four knots), would naturally allow for at least three longitudinal or cross strings to be strung from a single string; one of ordinary skill in the art would realize that a rectangular frame shape would not preclude the use of conventional stringing techniques.

Regarding claims 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31, it is well-known in the art that the tensions involved in the stringing process naturally deforms a racquet to a minor degree. Since the Woehrle racquet as modified above is intended to be rectangular, it would have been within the capabilities of one of ordinary skill in the art to slightly bow the Woehrle racquet as modified above to offset the inwardly-pressing tendency of the string tension so the strung racquet frame would remain rectangular.

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Regarding claims 18, 19, 25, 26, 32 and 33, stringing patterns are old and well-known in the art to have either constant or variable string spacings.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14-34 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 20, 27 and 34 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this

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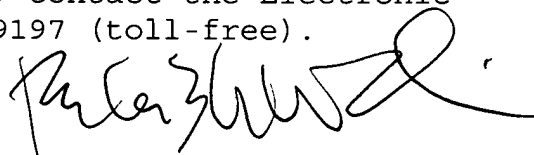
action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raleigh Chiu whose telephone number is (571) 272-4408. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Greg Vidovich, can be reached on (571) 272-4415.

The fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Raleigh W. Chiu
Primary Examiner
Technology Center 3700